Strengthening agricultural research

*436. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have approved a Rs. 1200 crore project to strengthen agricultural research putting renewed emphasis on shoring up farm revenue;

(b) if so, whether this research project would also be re-oriented to the market-driven WTO regime, which our farmers are required to adopt gradually in a foreseeable future to improve their competitiveness in the international market; and

(c) whether any other agency, other than the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, would also be involved, so as to get better exposure for twin objective of food self-sufficiency and boosting income for a market-driven scenario?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Government has approved the National Agricultural Innovation Project for US$ 250 million (approximately Rs.1200 crore).

(b) The sub-projects particularly under research on production to consumption system component under National Agricultural Innovation Project would address market driven WTO regime.

(c) The sub-projects would operate in consortium mode involving diverse stakeholders, from public and private sectors.

Over utilisation of railway tracks

*437. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that over utilisation of railway tracks to the extent of 125 percent would go against railway safety;

(b) whether it is also a fact that rejected wagons and coaches are re-used without clearance from the N.C.W.;

(c) whether this kind of rejected wagons and coaches are used almost to the 80 to 90 percent in the Southern Railway;

(d) what are the measures to avoid this situation; and